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Wenger - Players must stand up to stress

Arsène Wenger believes the pressure on players nowadays is greater than it has ever been before.

Arsenal are third in the Premier League, into the FA Cup semi-finals and face a fight to reach the quarter-finals of the Champions League.

While Wenger can play his part in easing the weight of expectation on his squad, he says much of the work has to be done by the players themselves.

Twenty years ago you could lose a game and people would say, ‘Next time Arsenal will play better’. Today you lose a game and it is always a crisis
Arsène Wenger

“We can only help so much, 99 per cent is down to the individual,” the manager told Arsenal Player. “We can push them over the line with the one per cent we can give, but 99 per cent is them having the responsibility to make their own life.

“You have to stand up to be strong enough, to fight, to show that you have the courage and that you’re not inhibited because you’re under pressure, and that’s the difficulty of the modern player.

“That has increased and the resistance to stress from the young players is immense today because everything is analysed. Every pass you make, every first touch, how far you run, how much you fight, everything.

“There is a verdict on everything so that kind of stress has increased and it’s much more difficult to deal with than it was a few years ago.

“Twenty years ago you could lose a game and people would say, ‘Next time Arsenal will play better’. Today you lose a game and it is always a crisis. It’s not easy for the players to deal with that.”
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